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O B J E C T I O N S

T O T H E

Abolition of the Slave Trade,

W I T H

A N S W E R S.

T O W H I C H A R E P R E F I X E D,

Strictures on a late Publication, intituled,
“ Considerations on the Emancipation of
“ Negroes, and the Abolition of the Slave
“ Trade, by a West India Planter.”

By the Rev. JAMES RAMSAY, A. M.

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EXHIBITION

TO THE

Abolition of the Slave Trade

AND

FOR THE



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EXHIBITION

AND

FOR THE

INTRODUCTION.

THE following Objections to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, with Answers, were intended to give a summary view of that subject. These objections being collected from various persons and writings, there will be found in them no small degree of contradiction, for which the collector is not answerable. But whatever they may be, they have all been advanced by different people, with a view to produce an effect on persons who have not studied the subject; and they are therefore necessarily brought together here, to be separately examined and weighed. If every answer be not found equally conclusive, the candid reader will remember that it is a single person, who endeavours to give him a view of a very extensive subject, which takes in a variety of considerations.

Since this plan was resolved on, a publication has appeared in favour of the slave trade, which, coming at once fairly to the question, claims a particular attention. It is intitled, Considerations on the Emancipation of the Negroes, and on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by a West Indian Planter; and is affirmed by the Monthly Reviewers to be invincible, on political grounds.

I shall first observe, that where this author treats of a general or partial emancipation of slaves, he combats a shadow; because the present plan aims
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only at the abolition of the African slave trade. It meddles not with slaves already in the colonies; if it did, that sympathy, which first incited me to plead their claim to better treatment, would force me to range myself on the author's side, and protest against the indiscreet measure. All our slaves are not yet generally in a state, wherein full liberty would be a blessing. Like children, they must be restrained by authority, and led on to their own good. But it would be insidious not to declare, that humanity looks forward to full emancipation, whenever they shall be found capable of making a proper use of it. But this may be left to the master's discretion. He who can procure a freeman to work for him, will never employ a slave: for the first does twice the work of the other; and when he dies, his place is supplied in the natural course of generation, not at an enormous expense from the slave-market. See my Essay, p. 118, &c. In Pennsylvania, where slaves are farther advanced in civilization, the Quakers have tried this experiment with the most complete success. Among many others, one man has freed 100 slaves, and finds his work better done, and his profits greater, for having divested himself of this unnatural property. Indeed, what doth a peasant reap from his labour, which a slave ought not to receive, food, raiment, and necessities, to enable him to raise up labourers for his employers. But there is a confidence, a charm in liberty, that doubles his exertion, and softens its toil. While increasing his employer's wealth, he provides for his family, and when his task is finished, his time is his own; no capricious tyrant intermeddles with his joy. Farther, the British legislature should be cautious how it meddles with the state of slaves in the colonies, lest, while attempting

tempting to regulate their treatment, it confirm the bonds of slavery. If regulations be necessary, the island assemblies should enforce them. While Britain gives them a monopoly of her sugar market, she will always preserve a check over them. But if emancipation be not intended, the claim to the compensation of £60,000,000 connected page 5. with it, is cut off. We have only to consider how far the abolition of the slave trade will affect the planter's property, in such a manner as shall intitle him to compensation. But the argument rests on a foundation, that I trust will not be allowed: he says, page 3, "That the planter possesses a political right to his slave, whatever may be his moral right, and must be paid according to the slave's value, before his right can be extinguished by restoring the slave to his natural freedom." This plea is not good. A horse has been fairly bought in an open market, established by authority: but he had been stolen, and the right owner discovers and claims him, and the thief is gone off. Must the right owner repay the fair purchaser his price; or will this last be allowed to keep him? Still a horse is an object of property; but when the question is fairly agitated, I deny that a man can ever be an object of property, except in the case of an atrocious crime, which applies not to one slave in a thousand, and excludes all children: the act that reduces him to slavery, is illegal and unjust; for it is impossible for a slave to receive a compensation for his liberty.

A band of robbers may agree in stealing horses, for each man to keep those seized by him. This is binding on them, but not on the right owner, whenever he can assert his claim. In like manner, one slave-holder may prescribe against another

slave-holder, for the use of a slave; but he can make out no right when humanity lays in her claim; nor can he demand compensation. Still, whatever be the claims of humanity here they are not enforced. In whatever manner the planter has acquired his slaves, no one intends to disturb him in the quiet possession. We only aim to prevent his dealing in them, as far as it encourages robbers and murderers to carry on an inhuman traffick in the bodies of our fellow-creatures, which, as we shall plainly shew, will ultimately only ruin himself, if he perseveres in it. And can he come in such a case to government for relief, and say, Hitherto I have been allowed to buy from man-stealers, wretched slaves to toil without recompence, without food, without cloathing, for my profit; if you take this privilege from me, on which I have depended, on which I have hazarded my fortune, you must make good all my losses as I shall state them, even to the amount of £60,000,000?

The case is fairly stated, murder and robbery are not on this subject exaggerated terms. The nature thereof cannot be explained without them. And can "a political right" be opposed to this reasoning? Can the planter's property be preserved to him, only by means that the feeling heart shrinks from the discussion of? Perish for me such considerations! As a moral agent, as a member of a Christian community, I am not ashamed to maintain, and I trust I am not singular in my opinion, that no political right ought to be sustained, which is not founded on morality and justice.

The slave has a natural right to freedom. Could we replace him where slavery found him, he ought to be returned to that situation. But we cannot restore his cottage, his family, his relations,
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his country. If born a slave, we cannot often make him worthy of being a freeman. The only recompence we can make, is to treat him with consideration, and receive in return such service from him, as leaves him the reasonable enjoyment of himself. But because we have already deprived his country of millions, which have been sacrificed to our avarice, are we, for any argument that avarice or politics can adduce, to go on to murder and to destroy? Is moral reasoning, is equal justice, of so little consequence among us, as on this ungenerous ground to be set wholly aside? My candid adversary will blush, when he views this truly horrid business in this light; and even if the traffick were as valuable as he estimates it, would spurn from him wealth, that must be acquired and kept by such methods. To do as we wish to be done by, is the dictate of natural justice, as well as of Christianity. We cannot lay in a claim to the attributes of humanity, if we deny its influence.

But, p. 11. This point of political right is given up; for he says, "if the abolition were general, nothing could be more salutary, because every nation would be left in its relative situation." But if it be a right general measure, it is a right measure in respect of us. We are not accountable for, we are not concerned in, the conduct of others; if there be any connection, it may be safely left to the management of administration. Our planters cannot be interested in it, while they enjoy the monopoly of the British market, where the price is higher than in any other place, and the demand increases faster than they can increase their produce. And so much persuaded am I (as I shall make appear) of their being able to keep up, or even increase the present produce of sugar from

the number of slaves now in the colonies, without any new importation, that did they prove unable to supply the market, I should be induced to charge it to their mismanagement, rather than allow a compensation; and should propose ports to be opened in the West-Indies, for the introduction of as much foreign sugar, as would make good the deficiency. Thus sugar would be kept at a moderate price to the consumer; our shipping would continue to be employed, and our revenue need suffer no injury. We do this in a scarcity of grain, why not also in a scarcity of sugar. But this remedy will only be necessary, should the planter wear his slaves out (as the author, p. 7, supposes) by ill treatment and severity.

Farther, p. 33. he says, "If planters were allowed time to prepare for the event, by stocking their estates to the full extent of their demands, the slave trade might be abolished." Now while the slave market is open, inconsiderate planters, from their eagerness to push on the culture of their estates farther than it will profitably go, will continue to have demands on it. I solemnly affirm, that as often as I have heard the question concerning the buying or breeding of slaves discussed among planters, the preference has always been given to buying. The reader will determine what encouragement to population may be expected where this opinion prevails. And the fact in my time was, that nothing raised a manager's resentment sooner, than to be informed that a negress was with child. I include not every manager; many are worthy humane men; I give it only as the prevailing opinion in this case. But a positive abolition of the slave trade will bring the planter to a sense of his interest. Useless domestics will be turned into the field.

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One third of the number of hired servants will fully supply their place. The small number of these last, will allow them to be well fed on a part of the present expense of domestic slaves, and their wages will be a small proportion of the sum which goes annually to purchase new slaves.

But, p. 16. It is allowed, that "where the planter is unencumbered, or has sufficient strength, there the stock may be kept up from the births." The number in this situation must be considerable. Every West-Indian family residing in Britain must be reckoned in it. For only the overplus revenue, after providing for the plantation, can be spent here. Therefore a great part of the £60,000,000, claimed for ruined planters, will be saved in this class. Of involved planters, I affirm, that not one will be recovered from ruin by any purchase of new slaves at their present advanced price. When Long, near twenty years ago, wrote his History of Jamaica, vol. 2. p. 437. such purchases only involved him farther in debt. Slaves are now almost one third dearer; the expense of supporting them is increased. Without taking into account the frequent accidents of hurricanes and bad crops, new slaves do not repay their first cost, interest, expense, and reduction of number in seasoning.

Again, p. 26. It is said, that "generally speaking, every West Indian planter will affirm slavery to be an evil; it is just to prevent negroes from being enslaved." Then let us do what is just, and leave the issue to a watchful Providence. If slavery be an evil, if it be unjust to enslave negroes, he is in a dangerous situation, who by his demand of them encourages this injustice, and promotes this evil. That politician, who, p. 27, is said to be "unable to square his conduct by

“moral rectitude,” will assuredly come short of his purpose. Suppose in this enlightened age, it were proposed to fit out a squadron to go up the Baltic, to land parties to murder those who resist, to seize on the helpless, to bribe the natives to kidnap each other, to be brought over tied neck and heels to work in our coal mines; there is not a pretence for the present slave trade, for carrying on the manufacture of sugar, that may not be used here. It employs shipping, it saves our own people from a destructive employment; and if the Germans be warlike and oppose us, it will exercise us in arms. But if we spurn at this new scheme, because iniquitous and violent, why is the slave trade esteemed less violent and iniquitous, for having been the practice of two centuries? Do we use the woman’s argument for skinning eels alive, that the Africans are accustomed to it? Whatever may be the case of their country or race, individuals are not accustomed to it. To each unhappy wretch, it is a new, a fatal stroke, that carries him away for ever from his native spot, and determines and fixes his misery. Habit cannot contribute to make it tolerable. They sink under the anguish, and are lost for ever to society and themselves.

Nor can the good consequences of this horrid trade be pleaded in extenuation of its cruelties. From comparing the numbers imported into the colonies, with the number of Creoles left, it is plain not one African in ten leaves posterity behind him. But the value of a Creole slave, which is the only lasting good from importation, will be dearly purchased at the expense of ten new slaves. And if a new slave will neither repay his expense by his labour, nor leave a profitable posterity behind him, why is he purchased? Why adds the planter

planter this unproductive bargain to his former incumbrances? Why is he concerned in a cruel traffick that cannot profit him; that must undo him?

I am sorry to observe, p. 13. the following sentiment in this candid writer: "Negroes are bought not for population, but for work; which, if not done, must ruin their owners." The conclusion is, that as the owner will not willingly ruin himself, the negroes must be worked at all hazards, and as "their condition exposes them to accidents conducing to depopulation, their numbers must decrease." The meaning is, sugar must be made, at the expense of the slave's life. Supposing this for a moment of those already slaves, is Britain to be charged with the expense of £60,000,000, because it forbids its own citizens any longer to commit robbery and murder, to supply slaves, who are professedly to be worked down unprofitably in the making of sugar. But why must the culture of the cane be conducted in a way, that admits not of an attention to the feelings of those employed in it? Are the claims of nature, and the cravings of civilization so irreconcilable as to destroy one another? It is acknowledged, p. 7. that "slaves, where not worked beyond their strength, are hearty, happy, and breed faster." P. 11. 24. that "the abolition of the slave trade, if general, would lessen the evils of slavery, and make the breeding and preservation of slaves more an object of attention." If these be the genuine effects of such a plan, what claim can he have on government, who, from a short-sighted love of gain, pushes his slaves beyond their strength, and destroys his property and prospects together? Let him

him meet with execration from every feeling heart, and fall unpitied !

But from various examples in the different islands, it is evident that excessive exertions have not in one case in an hundred produced immediate profit ; and that to keep the work of slaves within their strength is the best rate of employing them, the most profitable way of cultivating a plantation. The number of sick, dead, and runaways, the listlessness of those who remain, soon reduce the greatest exertions far below what might be got out of the gang with cheerfulness and ease. In every instance, and they have been numerous within my observation, this pushing method defeated its own immediate purpose. The quantity of work performed overpowers not the slave ; but the time he is kept drawling at it, which leaves him no indulgence, no leisure to rest his wearied limbs. He might do much more in half the time. Therefore, if planters, on the abolition of the slave trade, resolve, as is supposed, p. 15. “ to persevere in making forced exertions,” they will have themselves to thank for the consequent ruin. Parliament can dispose better of the public money, than in making good their loss.

I shall now consider the immediate effects of the abolition of the slave trade on the planter's property, the revenue, &c. We will suppose, with the considerations, p. 4. that the plantation slaves are worth 20 millions, and the planters other property is equal to 40 millions, in all 60 millions. We will estimate the whole annual plantation produce of sugar, cotton, coffee, &c. to be equal to 250,000 hhds. of Muscovado sugar, worth in the colonies 17l per hhd. (their superior value in Britain seldom exceeding freight, insurance, and other expenses) or £. 4,250,000.

Suppose

Suppose the current annual expenses of plantation stores, managers, overseers, agents, surgeons salaries, taxes, feeding, cloathing of slaves, to be £5 per head on half a million of slaves and white people employed on or about plantations, or £2,500,000. We trade with Africa for 40,000 slaves annually. The Considerations, p. 30. suppose one half sold to our planters. Twelve years ago prime slaves sold for £48. They are not become cheaper. But suppose them when sold by the lot £43, the annual supply of 20,000 will cost £860,000. Long, vol. 2. p. 482. says, they are not useful till after three years. Three years interest must then be added. The interest in the colonies varies from 10 to 6 per cent. Little money is lent to planters without a premium; or what is worse, consignments of sugar. Suppose the interest 7 per cent.; three years interest is £180,600. At the three years end, the 20,000 slaves will have cost £1,040,000. This, added to annual expences, leaves £710,000 for the returns of a capital of 60 millions; something better than one per cent. This is the profit of the manufacture which we are solicited to support.

The slaves in all our colonies, taking those in Jamaica from a late estimate, and supposing the other islands to have lately decreased 40,000, may be reckoned 450,000. Of these the Creoles must make 350,000; and among them the proportion between the sexes follows the course of nature. The African slaves, of which the greater part is male, cannot exceed 100,000. For these all die in fifteen years, and one third in the first three years. But, about twelve years ago, the war put almost an entire stop to their importation; so that four-fifths of all purchased before that time
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must be dead ; and since the return of peace, the trade has been chiefly turned to the supply of St. Domingo. It is remarkable, that in this island, in the six years preceding 1774, there had been introduced 103,000 African slaves, and 61,728 had been born, making together 164,728 ; of which in 1774, there remained in all 40,000. To return, suppose these 450,000 slaves rented. Their rent and insurance would, at the low rate of £ 10 per head be £ 4,500,000, which exceeds their whole produce, and leaves nothing for the returns of lands, &c. worth 40 millions more. Such is the property which parliament is called on to make good. We will take it in the most favourable point of view. If the planter pays his annual current expenses, and supports his stock, all except negroes, out of a sum equal to the rum, coffee, &c. and such a part of the sugar as leaves for the return of his capital £ 12 per hhd. on the sugar alone, he is tolerably well satisfied. An ordinary crop of sugar is about 160,000 hhds. at £ 12 or £ 1,920,000. Strike off £ 920,000 for the supply of slaves, we have one million for the returns of a capital of 60 millions, or about 1½ per cent. If any plantation requires no supplies, then the returns are about 3 per cent. But not one half of the plantations support themselves, or make any returns on their capitals, this will allow a certain proportion to make 4, 5, or some few 8 per cent. on their capital ; but only if they buy no new slaves.

Long tells us, vol. 2. p. 437. 438. that the proportion of two hhds. of sugar to three slaves, all ages included, is the utmost quantity they should be made to produce, if the planter wishes to keep up or increase them from the births. It is indeed a greater proportion than the colonies at present

present supply; and therefore the slaves ought to increase from the births. Suppose these three slaves valued only at £ 50 each; (though, twelve years ago, I have known gangs, including all ages, valued at £ 60) or £ 150. The lands or property occupied by them are worth double, or £ 300. The two hhds. of sugar produced by the three slaves, after providing above for every expense, except new slaves, are worth £ 24. But the interest of the three slaves, and other property occupied by them at 6 per cent. is £ 27. The insurance of the slaves at 5 per cent. is £ 7 10s. in all, £ 32 10s. the loss is £ 8 10s. Suppose the slaves rented: rent and insurance is now seldom so low as £ 12 per head; take it only at £ 10, or on three slaves £ 30. Here is a loss on them of £ 6, and no return on the lands, &c. worth £ 300; which, at 6 per cent. are worth £ 18. In these calculations, no allowance is made for hurricanes or bad crops, or high interest; and in several colonies, the proportion of sugar is set too high. Barbadoes contains 64,000 slaves. After allowing for the current expenses, its produce is not £ 4 for each slave, without supposing any returns for lands, &c. worth 6 millions. Montserrat contains 9000 slaves, and makes 3000 hhds. of sugar, or one hhd. for three slaves. Here also can be no returns for lands, &c. worth one million. Dominica returns not one per cent. of the money laid out on it.

We have observed, that 20,000 new slaves cost in three years £ 1,04000. But, in three years time, according to Long, vol. 2. p. 434. a third part is dead. We have then 13,700 slaves, worth £ 1,040,000. To this we must add three years expense of physic, feeding, cloathing, &c. This we will make only £ 10 on the original number of 20,000, or £ 200,000. We have then 13,700
 slaves

slaves which cost the planter £1,240,000 or £90 each slave. The reader will observe, that in the first estimate, the expense of feeding the slaves, &c. at £5 per head, is thrown among the current expenses. But here, where we estimate the value of the slaves, it is an addition to their value, till they become useful. These calculations are founded on the Planter's own conceptions, or on estimates which he must admit. They may be varied, but the conclusion will come out nearly the same. Particularly no just estimate can be framed of the expense of new slaves, that makes not the survivors exceed £90 in value. Long, vol. 2. p. 435. supposes that often one half dies. This would raise each of the survivors to £124. In many cases, in our new islands, it has been two-thirds. In one within my own knowledge, had the remnant of slaves been sold each for £400, the owner would have been a loser. In the most favourable case that can be put, the survivors of African slaves never pay for the cost and expense of the whole lot. We have observed the unproductive labour of slaves, valued only at £50. When valued at £90 or more, the loss will be more considerable. Three slaves at £90 are worth £270. Their rent and insurance at this high value cannot be so low as £12 each, or in all, £36. But the two hhds. of sugar produced by them are worth only £24, after paying current expenses. There are £12 lost on the rent, and £18 lost on the lands, &c. occupied by them. If these calculations be disputed, it is hoped the Planter will correct them, by stating them in his own way. I have gone by the best information I could procure.

We may therefore conclude, that no new importation of new slaves can turn out profitably to the
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the planter; but as Long acknowledges, vol. 2. p. 437. must form only a new addition to his debts and difficulties. Therefore, the abolition of the slave trade, far from giving the planter a claim to compensation, will really save him. Government will prevent him from continuing to involve himself unnecessarily in bankruptcy and ruin. The only means by which he can improve his condition is, as Long advises, to use prudent regulations in the right husbanding of his stock, and promoting its increase by natural means.

But indeed the annual supply of new slaves, which in any case, with all its consequences, can hardly be set below a million in value, is such a drain as no profit can admit of; nor can any possible reduction in the produce supposed to follow the abolition of the slave trade, affect the planter's profit equally with this annual drain; so that it must be a profitable measure, which at any hazard cuts it off. The sum paid for new slaves, if saved, would allow of encouragement to white people for domestics and artisans, that where there is a want of slaves to keep up the full cultivation of the estate, domestic slaves may be turned into the field to make up the deficiency.

It appears that the Creole slaves, where the sexes are proportioned to each other, according to Long's estimate of three slaves to two hogsheds, without taking the Africans into account, may increase the present produce, even in the liberal estimate of 250,000 hhds. at which we have set it (for the rum is included here in the making of sugar to make up that quantity of produce, and requires hardly any extra number of slaves) and may not only keep up, but increase their numbers. Therefore, if the planter be not his own enemy, he needs not come to government for

for relief, or go to the slave-market for recruits; his crops, his property, will not be affected. He will need no compensation. The public treasury needs not be opened to reimburse the 60 millions West-Indian property, with the annihilation of which we are threatened.

But it is said, the revenue will annually lose two millions; because no sugar will be imported. Suppose not an ounce of sugar imported, our ability to pay taxes would not on that account be lessened. Allow the revenue, freight, &c. on sugar to be two millions, and the sugar itself to be worth four millions. The British consumers then pay six millions for sugar. If no sugar were used, he could then pay government six millions instead of two. If any thing be used for sugar, a revenue may be raised on that article. If we have foreign sugar, government may increase the tax, because it will come one-third cheaper than from our own colonies. The planter is not to suppose he contributes one farthing of these two millions, any more than the Emperor of China does of the commutation tea-tax; except for the consumption of sugar in his own family residing in Britain. The consumer pays the tax. Sugar is only the medium by which it is raised on the public. The like ruin to the revenue was predicted, when America threatened to withhold her tobacco; but we have experienced no such effect from the measure.

Again, the abolition of the slave trade will ruin the West-Indian trade, which will ruin our marine, p. 22. I trust the West-Indian trade is in no danger. But suppose the one annihilates the other. We shall, by abandoning the slave trade, save more seamen than the other employs. The African slave trade destroys annually 2000 men; in ten years 20,000. The sugar colonies may

may employ 12,000 seamen. The loss here is 3 in 200. Suppose annually 200, in ten years 2000. The whole number of men employed in the West India trade in ten years, is 14,000. But in this time 20,000 are lost in the slave trade. If both were annihilated, in ten years we should save 6000 men.

I trust I have removed effectually the fear of a demand to be made on the treasury for 60 millions West-India property to be annihilated by the abolition of the slave trade. I have on the contrary proved, that the planter will not be injured, but relieved; or if injured, that he must blame his own severity and avarice. I have proved, and shall farther prove, that commerce will not be hurt, that the revenue or shipping need not be lessened. In short, that the measure is agreeable to the demands of humanity and justice, and also to the suggestions of prudence and political wisdom. One may blush to think these should ever be placed in opposition. The author of nature never intended to separate them. They will never be found in opposition, when every consequence is taken into account. Whatever is just or honourable leads to profit and advantage, as well public as private. Must a great nation be obliged to send out robbers to destroy and enslave an innocent people in a different quarter of the globe; or set these on to destroy and enslave each other for the increase of its revenue? Can any advantages so procured turn out well at the last? This traffick steels the heart against every human feeling; it corrupts the mind, and, if continued, will prove a canker to eat into our prosperity and importance.

In combating the West-India planter's reasoning, I preserve the utmost respect for his candour.

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I trust I shall have pleased him in shewing that that justice and humanity, which he generously acknowledges to be on the side of the abolition contended for, are not at variance with political rights or worldly prudence. He himself favours the plan, if the planter's interest could be secured. The whole depends on the circumstance of new slaves being a profitable or losing purchase. Long agrees with me in their having been found a losing bargain near twenty years ago. Since that they have advanced near one third in value, and every expense about them is increased. What is the fair conclusion which he makes? that the purchase much hasten the ruin of every involved planter.

In stating the following objections, I have collected from every quarter whatever I have found urged on the subject, and have given the most direct answers, each in its respective place. To preserve brevity, I have been as careful as possible to give no more on each head, than is necessary to obviate the objection in its most direct sense.

I shall here remark, that till it can be fairly proved by the planter, in opposition to the reasoning here used, and the authority of Long, that African slaves are, generally speaking, a profitable purchase; no argument for the continuance of the slave trade, as far as it may affect our colonies, can have any weight on political considerations. And though this should be indisputably proved, and no answer here given should be sustained as valid, yet ought the slave trade to be abolished, as long as its advocates allow, "that it is unjust to enslave negroes," that people, in respect of us, innocent, are dragged from their homes and families, are murdered by a thousand deaths,
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by chains, confinement, suffocating air, cruel treatment; that they are forcibly transported to distant islands, where not one in ten takes root, and there made to drawl out a wretched existence in incessant labour without food, without clothes, without rest, under the capricious treatment of any sort of master, or any unfeeling boy that may be set with a whip over them.

If we allow that power may confer right, may stifle a brother's groans, and trample on every unalienable privilege of human nature, let us boldly declare it, and send out fleets and armies, wherever resistance is not expected, wherever slaves may be seized, and plunder or revenue may be acquired. It is now only that this object has caught the public attention. Hitherto we have suffered ourselves to be persuaded, by interested men, without inquiry, of the advantage and propriety of this inhuman traffic. But after this open discussion, we cannot possibly go back. We will not, surely, permit certain murder to be carried on; and we cannot pretend to regulate a traffic, which is founded on murder, and cannot be separated from it. Should we permit this traffic to be continued, we declare ourselves to be the general enemies of mankind; we are to be considered as a nation of robbers, and deserve to be suspected and held in abhorrence, and guarded against by every surrounding and distant state.

J. R.

O B J E C T I O N S
T O T H E
Abolition of the Slave Trade,
W I T H
A N S W E R S.

Objection 1. *THE planter will shew his resentment of the measure, by treating his slaves more cruelly than before.*

Answer 1. The sudden diminution of his property, in consequence of such treatment, will discover to him the prudence of accommodating himself to his new situation, and the necessity of treating his slaves with humanity.

Object. 2. *The sugar colonies will throw themselves into the arms of France.*

Answer 2. Then will Britain be freed of the expense of their protection, and be able to procure plenty of sugar at two thirds of the present price. Planters complain that they can hardly cultivate their plantations, while enjoying the monopoly of

the British market. How will they bear the reduction of one third of its value in the markets of their new masters, for that is the ordinary proportion of the price of French sugars?

Object. 3. Planters in debt will carry their slaves to the Spanish colonies.

Answ. 3. This may be left to the vigilance of their creditors.

Object. 4. Sugar cannot be procured from foreigners.

Answ. 4. While sugar is made, British money will command it. Foreign sugars, near one third cheaper than British, have long found their way into our colonies. The importation may be extended, but it will not be necessary. Indeed sugar might be brought from the East-Indies, made by free men, much cheaper than slaves can possibly produce it in the West-Indies. Good clayed sugar is sold in Batavia by the cwt. for about 13s. Arrack made from it is worth only 8d. per gallon. These prices would allow of the expense of freight to Europe, and the sugar to be sold at 3d. per pound in England. In Cochin China it is made even at half this price.

Object. 5. The planter will prove the absurdity of the measure, by increasing the severity of his manner of treating his slaves.

Answ. 5. When he finds his property hurt by such a step, he will desist from his unfeeling conduct.

Object. 6.

Object. 6. Involved planters will waste their slaves by excessive exertions.

Answ. 6. Excessive exertions have constantly proved ruinous. Nor can the necessity of making such exertions be avoided by the introduction of new slaves; because they cannot possibly be made (see introduction) to repay their first cost, expense and loss in seasoning. Still the involved planter shuts his eyes, and goes on, though every example around him solicits him to abandon the vain attempt.

Object. 7. The neutral islands were settled, and their lands bought in a confidence, that government would continue to permit the importation of slaves.

Answ. 7. The sale of these lands has been closed near twenty years. If any of them be unsettled, they never can henceforth be profitably settled by African slaves; for they never repay their own cost, and therefore cannot contribute to clear lands and erect buildings. The truth is, that the lands now remaining uncultivated, have not generally been paid for, or have been abandoned as unprofitable.

Object. 8. Parliament has given its sanction to the trade by regulating it.

Answ. 8. If the countenance given by parliament to this horrid trade, has constantly been procured by the representations of interested people, must government be charged with the consequences arising from the imposition. Because we had laws that once fixed a commutation for murder, were we thereby precluded from ever improving

our police ? But this shews how cautious we should be, by any regulation, to give a sanction to oppression and murder.

Object. 9. *A religious society is possessed of a plantation in Barbadoes, and employs slaves.*

Ans. 9. It holds the Codrington estate for particular purposes, on condition of keeping up a certain number of slaves. Like other absent proprietors, it has suffered by the mismanagement of servants. It is now in a train to answer both the intentions of the donor, and the wishes of humanity.

Object. 10. *The treatment of horses should be regulated at home, before we look to Africa.*

Ans. 10. When we have vindicated the rights of our fellows, it is to be hoped horses will be considered; for doubtless they are an object of police. But doth not this shew, that a slave is esteemed a mere beast of burden.

Object. 11. *To imprison debtors, and impress men to serve in war, are violations of moral law, equally with domestic slavery.* Consideration, p. 28.

Ans. 11. He who runs in debt knows the consequences; but all is a force upon the poor negroe. Many men enter into the sea or land service willingly; and those who are impressed are treated as volunteers are. But we never heard of an African offering himself to be received into a slave ship; nor when he was forced on board, of having been put on a footing with the ship's crew. But the impressed sailor, he is among his countrymen,

men, and serves his country. What common tie subsists between an African, living 1200 miles from the sea coast, and a West-Indian planter, to induce him to submit to be tied neck and heel, to die a thousand suffocating deaths on ship board; to go and be beaten, half starved, and abused, in the cultivation of a plant, from which he reaps no profit?

Object. 12. The agitation of this question will raise a rebellion among the slaves.

Ans. 12. Helpless wretches. Their spirits are too much broken down to think of rebellion. But if it be suspected, let the planters, instead of moving heaven and earth to prevent their relief, come nobly forward, and propose a plan for their protection. They will bless and cheerfully serve them.

Object. 13. Slaves cannot be trusted with arms.

Ans. 13. They have formed a part of the militia in Barbadoes, and have been found faithful. This would universally be the case, were they advanced in society. They acquire the emulation of Britons, and would exert themselves in their cause, had they privileges or property to contend for.

Object. 14. Negroes are an inferiour race of beings.

*Ans. 14. Every man of candour acquainted with them will deny this. But suppose it, will those who plead for laws in favour of horses, maintain that negroes are to be trepanned, murdered
by*

by thousands, and enslaved for the indulgence of our avarice?

Object. 15. Leo Africanus describes the negroes of his time, Anno 1500, as brutish, and then sold for slaves, before the commencement of the present traffick.

Ans. 15. He says the shepherds and mountaineers, of all the different African nations, as well as negroes, were brutish; but that the people of the plains and cities were polished, having arts, sciences, and laws among them. He visited only the settlements along the Senegal branch of the Niger, and says the countries southward were possessed by rich industrious people, great lovers of justice and equity. He mentions the kings of Tombuto and Burno, two negroe states, as going to war to take slaves to be sold to merchants, trading to Ægypt and the Mediterranean cities. But do we argue for slavery, because at all times the strong have enthralled the weak? Because Joseph was sold by his brethren, was Pharoah vindicated for enslaving the whole Hebrew nation? Or are we to continue for ever to encourage negroes to kidnap each other to be sold to us, because 300 years ago the king of Tombuto kidnapped and sold his neighbours?

Object. 16. Supplies from Africa are necessary to keep up the stock.

Ans. 16. Because planters prefer the hopes (I deny they ever possess the substance) of present profit to future advantage; and commit their affairs to managers, who, being not concerned in what may happen thirty years hence, prefer the buying to the breeding of slaves. Hence we may judge
judge

judge how far to believe them, when they say they favour population. But stop the trade, and their opinion and practice will both be changed. That increase of slaves from the births, which accompanies humane treatment on every plantation, in every island where now practised, will then be general. But wherefore should we go to Africa for slaves? Why not to France, Spain, or Italy? It would be equally lawful, and the little opposition we might meet with, would encourage a military spirit among us, without the expense of fleets or armies.

Object. 17. Small plantations in debt will be abandoned, or united to others.

Answ. 17. It is the best thing that can happen both to debtor and creditor; for such never pay interest money; nor indeed do they support themselves, except where the planter is out of debt, and lives with his slaves, planting provisions for himself and them, and being contented to send to market as much sugar as an attention to these objects permit, to purchase what his plantation affords not,

Object. 18. Large plantations will send less sugar to market.

Answ. 18. In every plantation much land is put in canes that pays not for the culture. Perhaps one fourth part of St. Kitts is in this situation, and a much greater proportion in some other colonies. Turn this into provisions for the slaves, and grass for the cattle; fewer slaves will do the work, and the reduced quantity of land reserved for the canes, getting more manure, will stand the

the weather better, and produce more certain and better crops.

Object. 19. *The importation of sugar, and its revenue, will be affected.*

Answ. 19. The importation of sugar will never be profitably increased (see introduction) by the purchase of African slaves; and we have proved that the revenue depends not on the quantity of sugar made in our own colonies; for we may raise the same, or higher duties, on foreign sugars. (See introduction, and object. 4.)

Object. 20. *The consumption of British commodities in the islands will be lessened.*

Answ. 20. The consumption of the sugar colonies is hardly half the consumption of half a million of people in a distant quarter of the globe. But the abolition will greatly increase it. For the slaves must be better supplied than hitherto with necessities; and as they advance in society they will increase in their demands.

Object. 21. *The cultivation of the cane will be diminished.*

Answ. 21. So it may, and yet the quantity of sugar, and the profit from it, be increased, if only what pays for the culture (Object. 18.) be used; lands producing less than an hogshead per acre, hardly pays for the culture. Our islands contain about four millions of acres. A crop is taken from the same land every second year; from some fresh lands every year; 120,000 acres of good land selected for each crop, might give from
180,000

180,000 to 200,000 hogsheads, which exceeds a medium crop at present. According to Long's estimate, 200,000 hogsheads may be made by 300,000 slaves, without lessening their numbers. A much less number properly fed, worked and assisted with cattle, would be sufficient.

Object. 22. *The new islands require new slaves, and plantations underbanded may be improved by them.*

Ans. 22. Hardly has one plantation in the new islands given the lowest usual interest on its cost and expenses. But the price of African slaves is now advanced so high (Object. 19) that henceforth no purchase of them can possibly turn out profitable. The value of a negroe's labour, arguing from Long's estimate, vol. 2. p. 437, 438, of three slaves to two hhds. can be reckoned only at £8. But the usual rent and insurance of a slave, is from £10 to £12, and there is nothing left for the returns of the lands, &c. occupied by them. If ever, from this time, new lands be brought into culture, some other method, than this of working them by African slaves, must be tried. Let the planter twist the calculation as he pleases, he will never prove a new slave profitable.

Object. 23. *The planter can bear no interruption in the annual supply of slaves.*

Ans. 23. In the late war he bore the interruption for about six years, without any sensible injury. Since that time he has made but small use of the trade, but though in his own power, has turned it over to the French and Spaniards. There is an accommodating disposition in man,
that

that adapts itself to necessity. This measure indeed will only keep the planter, even in the opinion of Long, from running in debt.

Object. 24. *The planter will be ruined.*

Answ. 24. Not one will be injured (Object. 6. 22, 23.) whose ruin is not already sealed. He who is not in debt, will accommodate himself to his situation. He will throw out, or fallow his poor grounds. He will manure better what remains. He will allot lands for provisions and grafs. He will use the assistance of cattle. He will work slaves not as hitherto against time, but a certain task of work. He will allow them food, rest, and clothing. He will hire white people, or free negroes and mulattoes (of whom there are great numbers in the colonies, without employment) for domestics, and turn his slaves into the field. He will buy up around him for the culture of the cane, those slaves that are now employed in less productive labour, or that belong to poor free people, who are kept poor and idle, depending on their slaves industry. This plan is also the best that the involved planter can pursue, unless he can sell his slaves and other property to a more wealthy neighbour. Thus by being prevented from purchasing new slaves, many may be forced to methods of humanity, and saved from otherwise inevitable ruin.

Object. 25. *A sugar plantation is a profitable manufactory.*

Answ. 25. It is an expensive losing one. It will in no case succeed, but on a large scale, where it can have within itself provisions, recruits of
slaves

slaves and cattle. Even few of the most profitable could bear to be brought to calculation, if their expenses were carried on from the first purchase.

Object. 26. *White men cannot work in a West-Indian climate.*

Answ. 26. Nor white nor black can support unremitting labour, without food or rest. But white men kept from new rum, may, in the morning and evening, perform double the present task of slaves, without suffering from the climate. Barbadoes, St. Kitts, and Nevis, were originally settled by white men. It was only on the introduction of negroes, that they began to decrease in numbers. But the mortality could not possibly have been greater among them than has been lately in the new islands, and in clearing fresh lands in Jamaica.

Object. 27. *Nor will they work with slaves.*

Answ. 27. Poor white men do work along with their slaves. The best fortunes that have been established in the West-Indies, have been by those, who first worked to buy, and then shared labour with a slave. There is, I believe, a baronet now alive, whom his mother tied on her back, while she fed the mill with canes. The author got acquainted with a Frenchman in St. Vincent's, who began with his two hands, and settled and stocked in succession, five coffee plantations.

Object. 28. *Free negroes or mulattoes will not work with slaves in the field.*

Answ. 28.

Answ. 28. Then hire them as domestics, and turn domestic slaves into the field. The colonies at present contain twice as many slaves as are necessary, if properly assisted, treated and worked, to send the present produce to market; and any supply of labourers, if really wanted, is preferable to the African slave trade. Nor can an objection to the turning of domestics and others into the field, be made by him, who proposes to go to Africa to kidnap, or encourage others to kidnap, and force happy free people from their native country, to die a thousand deaths in their passage to the West-Indies, that perhaps one in ten may work in his field a half starved slave.

Object. 29. *Slaves are necessary as domestics, and handy craftsmen.*

Answ. 29. A slave handy-craftsman, performs not one third of the ordinary task of a freeman. But white handy-craftsmen may be increased as wanted. Families entertain from 20 to 60 slaves, who do not the work of 5 or 6 hired servants. The whole number of tradesmen, domestics and others, not employed about sugar in the colonies, may be estimated at 150,000. These being effective people, and worked in the field, well fed, properly tasked and assisted by cattle, might of themselves send more than the present quantity of sugar to market. This exchange from the house to the field, often takes place from caprice, as a punishment; and handy-craft slaves are occasionally sent in there. In any case, the exchange cannot encroach so much on the rights of humanity, as the slave trade to Africa.

Object. 30.

Object. 30. *No supply can be found if the trade be abolished.*

Answ. 30. This is answered (Object. 27, 28, 29.) Perhaps not more than one half of the effective slaves in our colonies is actually employed in the culture of the cane. There is then in the colonies a sufficient supply of field slaves, till the encouragement of population shall have taken effect.

Object. 31. *Slaves are happier than English peasants.*

Answ. 31. Have peasants their eyes beat out, their bones broken, their flesh furrowed by the whip, their wives exposed to a bailiff's lust; are they, without remedy, confined to any, the most unreasonable oppressive master? Are their wives and children taken from them, and sold to distant parts? Do they cultivate barren spots of ground on Sundays for food? Is their daily allowance six ounces of flour? Have they no warm clothing; no linen to wrap their new-born babe in? But it is endless to mark the difference. The assertion insults common sense.

Object. 32. *Negroes are happier in the colonies than in Africa.*

Answ. 32. Positively denied. Do they ever offer themselves to be received into our slave ships, to escape from their wretched country? Is there not a charm in the place of nativity, that makes to the natives, Greenland more desirable than the polished parts of Europe? Do they not seize every opportunity of rising against, or escaping

caping from their oppressors? Do they not increase in their own country, and decrease in our more desirable colonies? For one moment suppose this true. For one that lives to settle in the West-Indies, ten are killed, suffocated, or lost to Africa. To make one man happy, must ten be destroyed? But how can wretched Africa bear an annual loss of 200,000 people in the prime of life, at which the slave trade and its consequences may be fairly estimated, while happy West-Indians (by the report of the African merchant, a writer on the planter's side) require an annual supply of 40,000, or nearly one tenth of the whole? This objection is advanced for a particular purpose, and is exaggerated. But we know certainly that little and very easy labour supplies them with food and clothing in Africa; unceasing labour starves them in the West-Indies. Indeed, how can they be said to be happy in a country, who, in several islands, have not a scrap of land allotted for their maintenance, that can be turned to any other culture?

Object. 33. The labour of slaves is cheaper than that of free men.

Ans. 33. Most positively denied. The planter affirms, that it requires six slaves to do the work of one peasant. The most pinching allowance that can be given to a slave, and the lowest estimate his rent and insurance can be laid at, must amount to a much larger sum, than the bare handy labour of any peasant, without cattle and instruments of husbandry, could possibly perform. But it has been proved (See introduction) that the labour of a slave pays not for his cost and expense in seasoning. A master must supply the death of
a slave

a slave at an enormous expense from the slave-market. For a little better food and clothing, in return for a double task of work, the peasant, without cost, breeds labourers in succession for his employers. But when it is acknowledged that slaves do less work than peasants, (if they do it cheaper, then they earn less in the same time, and have therefore less means to buy the comforts of life) how then can they be happier than English peasants, for example, (Object. 31.) who earn so much more by their labour, and therefore have more the means of indulgence?

Object. 34. *Emancipation of slaves will ruin the master.*

Ans. 34. It is not even suggested, (See introduction) till their improvement shall have made it the master's interest freely to bestow it. The simple abolition of the trade, operating as a kind necessity on the interest and discretion of the planter, and taking away this delusive lure from short-sighted avarice, will do every thing at present for the slave, that humanity requires. If any abuses remain, they may be regulated as discovered, without injury to the master's property, or his just authority over it.

Object. 35. *If freed they will not work.*

Ans. 35. This conclusion is drawn from the indolence of savages. But it is not proposed to free them, till they shall have been civilized, and prepared for the government of law. To suppose that in such circumstances they will not exert themselves to procure the conveniences and comforts of life, in the same manner as other civilized

people, is to deny them the attributes of human nature. But there are many particular instances in the colonies to contradict the fact; and in North America many planters have emancipated their slaves, and afterwards hired them to work by the day or piece, and found their advantage in it. The colliers in Scotland have been lately freed, to the mutual benefit of master and servant. But indeed the objection is a mere conjecture, for very few have ever been freed in the West-Indies, on which the observation could be properly made.

Object. 36. *Theft is lightly punished in the colonies.*

Ans. 36. Not always. I have myself seen such instances of punishment on bare suspicion, as would make humanity shudder. But what must be the heart of that man, who can punish with severity a wretch, breaking a cane, or stealing to satisfy that hunger, which his parsimony has occasioned. Indeed the breaking of canes in my time, was a kind of high treason, to be punished with particular severity.

Object. 37. *Planters are misrepresented; therefore probably Guinea captains are so likewise.*

Ans. 37. If the planter's own conscience condemns him not, we bring not his character into the question. Without quoting names, cruel facts are alledged as connected with slavery. But the reputation of planters and Guinea captains, are not touched on. There are good men in both lines. It is the oppression and murder of friend-
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less Africans, for whom the publick attention is claimed.

Object. 38. *A profit is drawn from the slaves sold to foreigners.*

Ans. 38. Here the interest of the slave merchant and of the planter disagree. French planters particularly, not having much interest-money to pay, and managing their own plantations, can allot more of their produce to the increase of their stock, and give higher prices than our planters are willing to spare from their own personal expenses. The French planter does not any more than the English make an ordinary interest of his money by the purchase of new slaves; but he prefers this method of appropriating his income to that of spending it on his own personal indulgencies.

Object. 39. *If profitable for the French to buy, why not for us?*

Ans. 39. The French islands being more fertile than ours, can bear a more expensive cultivation; and their slaves being better fed and clothed, though unproductive, are not so much so as our slaves. Of 800,000 slaves imported into St. Domingo in 96 years preceding 1774, there remained 140,000 Creoles, or one Creole from six Africans. Our whole number of Creoles would not be perhaps in the proportion of one from 12 Africans imported into our colonies.

Object. 40. *The French having no longer a competition with us, will buy their slaves cheap if we abandon the trade.*

Answ. 40. In all settled trades the profit soon becomes to be nearly equally distributed among all those who are concerned in it. When an article has once settled at a certain price, it can hardly ever be reduced back to its original cost, even when that circumstance is removed, which first occasioned the rise. The tax on glass is said to have been doubled on the consumer. Repeal the tax, the price would not be diminished in proportion. Slaves, besides the expenses of the ship, which are £ 8 more, now cost in goods, on the coast of Africa, at a medium about £ 17. Passing through a variety of hands from the inland countries, in each of which a profit must be left, any reduction of price on the coast must make slaves a losing bargain, therefore the reduction of the price will counterbalance the want of competition. A manufacturer, who loses part of his customers, produces goods only sufficient to supply his lessened demand, and must try to lay a higher price on them, to make up for the loss of his former trade. But if we can shew that the slave trade is at best precarious, and often a losing trade, should the demand for slaves only change hands from us to the French, then will the French only extend a losing traffick. If the demand be lessened, then will the slave-brokers quantum of profit be lessened, which the present state of the trade will not bear. This leaves us to conclude, that the French cannot draw great advantages from our abandoning the trade to them.

Observ. 41. *If we give up the trade, the French will extend their share of it.*

Answ. 41. Suppose that others successfully rob and murder on the highway, must we join the lawless band. At present, the French buy many
slaves

slaves on the coast from our brokers. Our goods pay for them, our factories accommodate them. Stop these channels, and the French cannot at once easily supply the goods, or procure the slaves. To us it is (by the acknowledgment of men well acquainted with the trade, when they have not a particular point to carry) a precarious, and on the whole, a losing trade. Did one company carry it on, that company must become bankrupt. But their present share has so few allurements for their own merchants, that their government offers a bounty to English ships to be employed in it under French papers for the settlement of new lands in St. Domingo. Still the French planter complains of the hardship imposed on him by the advanced price of slaves. Therefore, if the French extend their trade, they will extend their loss, especially of seamen, which extraordinary as ours (see int.) is, greatly exceeds our proportion. In the mean time, it is a subject of discussion for government, to determine how far an eagerness for lucre may be indulged in our traders, when directed to the improvement of a rival colony, with a view to the establishment of a marine, though at the expense of the individual planters who push it on. In another point of view, if the subject be properly proposed, may we not suppose the French as capable as we are of being influenced by sentiments of humanity and justice?

Object. 42. This abolition will raise disputes on the coast of Africa with the French.

Ans. 42. The limits of our factories are established. Where the French hitherto have not been permitted to buy slaves, they cannot expect to be indulged to the hindrance of our
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traffic

traffic in wood, gums, ivory, gold, &c. From their want of factories, they cannot extend their slave-trade. If the minds of the natives be once pre-occupied in favour of the barter trade, they will not allow slave-brokers to pass, but at an expense, which the trade cannot bear. Perhaps the Dutch, Danes, and Portuguese, may be induced to follow our example. Then the slave trade could not be carried on to any great extent.

Object. 43. *Slaves will be smuggled in from other islands to ours.*

Ans. 43. Not at present, because our planters living in England cannot afford to give as high prices as foreigners give. Our planters now do not, or cannot, buy what they think the necessary supplies at the present advanced price; and if they did buy them, according to Long, they would find them an unprofitable purchase. Smuggled negroes cannot cost less than 20 per cent. above the present rate; how will our planters be able to afford this? But when smuggling is discovered, it may easily be prevented; it is not now necessary to suppose it.

Object. 44. *The trade is an extensive market for our manufactures.*

Ans. 44. We should blush to think, that in order to make it profitable, we are obliged to cheat the poor Africans with damaged goods, and false measure; (see Newton's Thoughts on Slave-trade). Every man who argues for such a trade, argues for the basest treachery and fraud that ever came to the gallows. If this trade were stopped, our present fair trade in the staple commodities of Africa,

Africa, might be indefinitely extended. The whole export is estimated within £ 800,000 collected from a number of adventurers, often as the last push, in hopes of a lucky hit, like a ticket in the lottery, to save them from bankruptcy. Of this a considerable part is bartered for staple articles, as wood, ivory, &c. and full one-third is said to be East-India goods. This estimate is checked by the number of slaves purchased by our traders on the coast. That number annually is about 40,000, which, at £ 17 per head, is only £ 680,000. The expenses of the voyage are £ 8 more, which are charged on those sold to the planter

Object. 45. Guinea captains, surgeons, and officers, alone gain annually £ 50,000 in this trade, and one particular dealer in Guinea ships made an immense fortune.

Answ. 45. These are almost all the people who make money in the trade. The captain and officers by their privilege slaves, who never die, and their commission on the cargo, must always make money. The dealer in ships alluded to, had a great number in the trade, and stood his own insurer in a lucky period.

Object. 46. Slaves once brought down from the inland parts of Africa must be exported to prevent them from being murdered.

*Answ. 46. Could the trade be stopped in a moment, the abolition should at once take place. But as numbers for many months must continue to be brought down to the coast, it will require some management to confine their sale to our own islands, should our planters be so much persuaded of their utility, as to put themselves to
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some inconveniencies in order to purchase them, that they may not be passed to foreigners.

Object. 47. Our planters have not credit to purchase slaves.

Answ. 47. This must not be urged by any planter residing in England; for if he thinks the purchase profitable, why allots he not his European expenses to this purpose?

Object. 48. The trade is a nursery for seamen.

Answ. 48. It is the very grave of seamen, destroying more than all our foreign trade besides, often losing by deaths, incurable diseases, &c. two-thirds of those employed in it; and in the proportion of about eight to one of those lost in the barter or wood trade on the same coast.

Object. 49. The West-Indian trade is most profitable to this country.

Answ. 49. Then why is every sugar factor trying all he can to shake off his connections with the sugar planters, or to confine them intirely to the sale of his sugars, and the shipping of his stores? Can any planter now borrow money on his West-Indian property, either to improve it, or pay off pressing demands? Has there not been more bankruptcies among capital houses connected with the sugar colonies, than in any other branch of trade? Nay, it will be found, that the slave-trader himself complains of the tardiness of the planter's payments.

Object. 50.

Object. 50. *Slaves must carry out dung in baskets, and bring canes home in bundles.*

Ans. 50. Allot lands for grafs, and one horse and cart will do the work of forty slaves.

Object. 51. *In crop time, the whole gang, whatever be its number, must be employed in making of the sugar.*

Ans. 51. Gangs of 220 slaves; others, not amounting to 100, are kept to the same work, with little difference in the quantity of sugar made, that may not be explained from other circumstances, as the situation of the mill for receiving the wind, &c. Here surely must be a waste of labour in the more numerous gang; because the other plantation work might also be carried on so as to make fewer slaves necessary at other times. The fact is, 140 or 160 slaves often cultivate as much land, and send as much sugar to market as 220 slaves. These last must therefore be ill managed.

Object. 52. *Slaves must be kept at work, or under command, from dawn till late at night.*

Ans. 52. What purpose this drawling method answers, but the indulgence of caprice or avarice ill understood, cannot be discovered. Give them a task. They may rest in the heat of the day, and do twice their present work. But they must be better fed, and not be sent in the hour of rest two miles from home to pick grafs for cattle.

Object. 53. *Slaves cannot be assisted by cattle.*

Ans. 53. The plough might be used in a great

great proportion of cane land. But cattle may at least assist always in carrying out dung and bringing home canes, as is now done on particular plantations. But such is the avarice for sugar, that no grass lands are allotted for the support of cattle. Hence often at the beginning of a crop, the whole stock of cattle must be renewed at any price.

Object. 54. The state of slaves will not be improved by the planting of provisions.

Answ. 54. The culture of provisions is easier than that of canes. Plant them where canes pay not for the culture. Expence is saved; the slaves are more plentifully fed, and the remaining cane land is better dressed, and becomes more productive.

Object. 55. Provisions must be brought from Europe and America to feed the slaves.

Answ. 55. This unnatural state answers neither the purpose of profit or humanity. Slaves will never be well fed by grain brought from distant parts. In bad years, when the planter is least able to purchase it, it will be most wanted. In the best years, luxury will grudge the cost. In fact, slaves will never be well fed with such purchased grain.

Object. 56. Slaves have sufficient provision ground.

Answ. 56. And, except in Jamaica, only Sunday to work it. But it is not generally true, either that they have sufficient ground, or that it is generally

generally useful. A few prime slaves appropriate the best parts, and weakly slaves are thrust out, or have their provisions stolen. Hardly ever can they spare them to ripen. Provision ground will be useful only, when made, equally with cane land, the work of the whole gang under the overseer. Yet this most necessary part of plantation economy is almost wholly neglected, the manager thinking much once or twice in a season to examine into the state of it.

Object. 57. Most excellent orders are sent out by absent planters.

Answ. 57. Whatever be their tenour, they are always interpreted by the custom of the colonies, which is for severity and pinching. They are always supposed to mean, Send home as much sugar, and draw as few bills on them as possible. A gentleman for fourteen years had desired the happiness of his slaves, not revenue, to be considered. But asking his managers why his slaves did not increase under such orders, he received for answer, "they had been too hard worked, " and too ill fed?"

Object. 58. It is the planter's interest to treat his slaves well.

Answ. 58. Then his practice contradicts his opinion. Can it be his interest to allow his slave neither food or rest? Are six ounces of flour, or five hours rest, sufficient refreshment for twenty-four hours? Can it be his interest to wear them out by inconsiderate fatigue, and in a few years be obliged repeatedly to renew his gang from the slave-market; rather than by discreet management
to

to enable them to carry on his work, and raise up without expense, successive generations of labourers for his profit.

Object. 59. The treatment of slaves should be regulated.

Answ. 59. Except in a very few points it is almost impossible for law to come between a master and his slave. A cruel or capricious man can tease and waste his slave in a thousand ways that law cannot check, nor authority reach. The Danes, indeed, have an effectual method in their islands, which has been enforced in several particular instances. The governor divests a cruel master of the management of his property, and sets humane people over it:—a custom truly worthy of imitation.

Object. 60. Plantations cannot be supplied from the births.

Answ. 60. Nor will they while the slave-market is considered as a better mode of recruiting them than that of population. But at present many increase from the births in all the rice, tobacco, and sugar colonies, from the casualty of a humane master, and easy manager, a careful manager's wife, an attentive surgeon. This proves the strong bias in nature to increase where not checked by oppression; and it would universally be the case if humane and proper treatment were universal.

Object. 61. Population is checked by an over proportion of males.

Answ. 61.

Answ. 61. This over proportion takes place only among African slaves, who are not prolific in the colonies, not from natural causes, but from chagrin, the want of necessaries, and encouragement. But their proportion cannot at present be very considerable, (see introduct.) The natural proportion of the sexes takes place among the Creoles, who are in sufficient numbers, if properly indulged and assisted, to overstock all our islands in a few years, without diminishing the present produce of sugar.

Object. 62. *Slaves are not kidnapped by our traders, but culprits or prisoners of war.*

Answ. 62. We do not say that any great proportion of them are now kidnapped by our traders; because as far as they can reach with their boats the country is either desolated by former depredations, or is under such police as makes it rather dangerous; though it sometimes happens that we hear of a captain making what he calls a stroke, sweeping away as many freemen as he can overpower with his crew. But we say that the natives kidnap each other, and that criminals make but a very small proportion of the whole. That they are kidnapped is almost the universal answer from those brought into our colonies; nor can the numbers brought down to the coast be accounted for in any other manner. But suppose them culprits or prisoners of war, are we then the executioners for African tyrants, or African judges? Are we to punish unfortunate wretches by the thousand deaths endured in our slave ships? Offer a Guinea captain, condemned for murdering his crew or his slaves, his life, on condition of being fettered and treated as a slave
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in the passage to the West-Indies, he would run for refuge to the gallows. Moore mentions a free negro offered to him for sale for stealing a tobacco pipe. If prisoners of war may be enslaved, why send we not our slave-traders to attend the Turkish and Russian armies, and provide ourselves there? It will be as just and proper, as to stir up wars in Africa for the purpose of making slaves.

Object. 63. Britain produces annually 2000 culprits. The negroe countries are four times as large. They therefore may supply annually 80,000 culprits.

Answ. 63. This supposes Africa equally civilized with Britain; for crimes are the offspring of civilization. Crimes exist not among savages. There must be laws and police to which they are to be referred. This, therefore, if true, cuts off another assertion, that the Africans are brutish. But how does our method of collecting slaves on the coast agree with this notion? Our traders should demand a certificate of the slave's sentence, lest he take away an innocent person. The fact is, among imported slaves there exists no appearance of culprits: some are young girls not grown up; many boys under 14 years: they generally affirm themselves to have been kidnapped. If criminals, some of their old practices would now and then break out; but they are quiet inoffensive people, guilty only of brooding over their unhappy state, or of stealing from a niggardly master to keep themselves from dying of hunger.

Object. 64. They are the children of women kept for breeding slaves.

Answ. 64. Then they would be sold when children;

children; but the slave cargoes consist of all ages of both sexes, which have been kidnapped or enslaved in wars made on purpose to accommodate the dealers in this horrid traffick.

Object. 65. The king of Dabomy murders his people for his amusement, therefore we may traffick in slaves.

Ans. 65. This monster, from superstition, sacrifices his own people, and from avarice, enslaves and sells others. But the one passion intermeddles not with the exertion of the other. Their operations are distinct. His avarice is encouraged by our traders, and renders numbers of his people wretched, in addition to those less unhappy people, who are the victims of his cruelty. By checking this inhuman trade, we should annihilate one half of the evil; by prosecuting it, we are guilty of all the ills produced by it, and encourage his savage disposition.

Object. 66. The slaves are bought in open market, and the brokers will not disclose any particulars respecting their captivity.

Ans. 66. Do not our traders wink with their eyes, and avoid any close inquiry? But if they be ignorant how they are originally procured in the land parts, how come they so well acquainted with the circumstances of their being the children of slave breeders, prisoners of war, and culprits? Indeed to call them culprits, contradicts another plea that they are brutish; for among savages there can be no culprits. Society must be well advanced before a man can be considered as criminal, and an object of justice.

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Object. 67.

Object. 67. *Slaves are well cared for on board the slave ships, and lose not above four in an hundred, in the passage from Africa to the West-Indies.*

Ans. 67. Where six men are stowed in the place of one, which is the difference between a slave-ship and a transport for carrying troops, it is impossible that the wretches can be well cared for. But for this, see Mr. Newton and Mr. Falconbridge's accounts of their horrid state. It may have possibly happened, that not more than four in an hundred, might in a particular case have been lost in the passage. But what is this to the many instances where an half, or even two-thirds, have been lost before the ship had reached the West-Indies? If so few be lost, how comes it that a slave-trader cannot get insurance in London on his slaves at any rate; or that those, who in one or two instances under-wrote slaves at 25 per cent. premium, refused to continue the advantageous bargain?

Object. 68. *They are encouraged to rear children, and will not.*

Ans. 68. Can they rear them for him, who demands bricks without straw, that they may be oppressed at his caprice? How few are put in the state, have food, clothes, or necessaries, to encourage them, or are indulged when pregnant, or when nurses? Can a young single lad, or a batchelor manager, as is now the growing custom to employ on plantations, have that fellow-feeling and sympathy with a child-bearing woman, that may be expected in a tender-hearted matron? I can recollect but one case, where slaves have increased under a batchelor. There some peculiarly

liarily favourable circumstances take place. Those acquainted with the usual treatment of slaves, may wonder how so many children are reared, rather than so few. Indeed, the ordinary causes of the increase of slaves on particular plantations, shew how easily population may be promoted.

Object. 69. *Negroe women are profligate, and destroy their fruit.*

Ans. 69. This takes place among none but perhaps a few, that are suffered to work, or hire themselves out among seamen.

Object. 70. *The number of Creoles, where the sexes only are in due proportion, is not equal to the support of the present stock.*

Ans. 70: Denied, see Introduction. Our Creoles exceed two-thirds of our present number of slaves; but not more than two-thirds of the whole are employed in the culture of sugar, and that in a proportion, which Long says, they may continue to increase from the births. Every other department may easily be supplied by white men or free negroes, and mulattoes. It must not be lost sight of, that few African women breed, and that no new slaves repay their cost, expense, and loss in seasoning. We cannot, therefore, suppose any future progeny of these capable of repaying the expense of such a purchase; and can expect a profitable recruit only from Creoles. But there are instances in every colony of humane treatment actually producing an increase. This will universally be the case, when the practice is universal.

Object. 71. *Unhealthy situations require supplies.*

Answ. 71. Can this be urged by any man pretending to humanity or discretion. Abandon the cultivation of the cane, rather than sport with a brother's life. The unhealthiness of mines, &c. cannot be pleaded here, because worked by volunteers. But no plantation that requires supplies can repay the expense. We may still ask, Has every proper measure been adapted for the particular situation? Are the huts fixed in a dry airy spot? Are the slaves plentifully fed, discreetly worked, well defended with clothes against damps, or wet weather. Few situations are to be found that may not be corrected, so as that the human constitution shall adapt itself to it. But their manner of living must be that of proper inhabitants, not artificial, as in a garrison, or used as beasts of burden, and pretended to be fed with grain brought from other quarters of the globe.

Object. 72. *Slavery is not unlawful; the bible allows of it.*

Answ. 72. The use of money is not unlawful. But it is unlawful to rob on the highway to procure it. We meddle not with slavery, but with the ordinary means of procuring slaves. We say men ought not to go to the coast of Africa to kidnap the natives, or to encourage them to kidnap each other; or to bribe them with baubles to go to war, to fight with and enslave each other; to turn every trespass into a cause for enslaving; to subject the unfortunate wretches to the miseries of a West-Indian voyage; to sell them

them to be half-starved, hard worked, and ill treated.

Christianity obliges us to instruct and inform the mind. Social liberty is the genuine consequence of improvement. Therefore we may say, that the Christian privilege favours liberty; and, while it avoids making any sudden change in established customs, it naturally tends towards it.

Object. 73. *The Jews were permitted to hold slaves.*

Ans. 73. They might keep the children of the heathen, and their posterity, slaves. But they were enjoined to treat them well; instruct them in their religion, and make them partakers of their religion and laws. The slaves were supplied with food and clothing from their six days labour, without being forced to work for this on Sabbath. If the master struck out but a tooth, the slave was to be free. If he took a maid-servant to his bed, or gave her to his son, she had the privilege of a wife, and could not be sold. We must imitate the example of the Jews, if we claim their permission of holding slaves. But by the coming of our Saviour, all men are become brethren. A Jew could hold a Jew in service only for six years, and only such as were too poor to maintain themselves. We make the Africans poor by enslaving them. But we should keep them slaves only for six years, and then dismiss them well supplied with necessaries. Farther, the Jews themselves were numerous in a small country. Their slaves must, therefore, have been few. Among those who returned from their captivity, there was but one slave to six Jews; perhaps one servant to each family.

Object. 74.

Object. 74. *Slavery renders oppression necessary. See Niger in Public Advertiser of March 12.*

Answ. 74. But what except avarice renders slavery necessary ; and can oppression, if it be the necessary consequence of a vice, be in any degree or shape vindicated ? Murder is often the necessary consequence of passion. Is murder therefore to be excused ? What an opening is here for crimes and villany of every sort.

Object. 75. *Free negroes and mulattoes do not increase from the births.*

Answ. 75. It is not true, many instances to the contrary might be produced. But it is also true, that no race or rank of men will continue to increase, except where the means of living are in abundance. Those here described, are exceedingly fettered between white men on the one side, and slaves on the other, for the means of subsistence. Therefore they cannot expand themselves. It is so with the native white people in St. Kitt's ; their marriages are prolific, but from the want of subsistence, the old families have insensibly vanished, and every year takes from the population of the colony.

Object. 76. *A compensation must be made to Planters for 60 millions of property, which the abolition of the slave-trade will annihilate.*

Answ. 76. It will be time enough to think of compensation when the loss has been sustained. Even then I should protest against the claims of such West-India appraisements as I have been acquainted

acquainted with. Yet no planter, not already ruined, will suffer by the abolition.

Compensation would defeat every purpose aimed at, for procuring good treatment to the slaves. Many Planters find their affairs irrecoverable. If they hurry not on their fate, from the hopes of compensation, at least they will be careless of the issue. Their former inconsiderate conduct will continue, perhaps will be sharpened, to enhance their demand.

If there be a Planter, who has fed his slaves well, and worked them considerately, has indulged them with proper rest, has clothed them properly, has furnished necessaries for the encouragement of population, has lived with them, has treated them as fellow-creatures, has made the support of his plantation his prime object, and been contented with that revenue which this attention would admit of; in the name of justice let him be liberally compensated. But such a character so circumstanced, so unsuccessful, is not to be found. The need of compensation is a sure proof he deserves it not. Again, let it be observed, that he claims this compensation because he is prevented from burying African slaves; which, even in Long's opinion, would only more involve him.

But if a man has separated himself from his property, has drawn a revenue to support at a distance an expensive establishment, from a property not equal to such demands, or which perhaps itself wanted supplies; if, to force out this revenue, his half-starved slaves have been incessantly worked; if necessaries for the encouragement of population have been withheld, and the assistance of cattle has been refused; let not this man come to government to make up a loss arising

ing from the cravings of luxury, or the inconsiderate use of power. In this class will be found every Planter who has ruined himself by speculating in sugar plantations. Mere adventurers cannot claim compensation, for they are where they set out. Their creditors have no claim; for they took the chance of their success.

Object. 77. The trade should be regulated, not abolished.

Ans. 77. Regulate murder as you please, it still remains murder. Suppose a regulation. It must check the mode of loading the slave-ships. But at present, with every contrivance in the shipmaster's power, it is on the whole a losing-trade; it depending on circumstances, whether a particular ship makes a saving voyage. Regulations which shall make it more expensive, will make that loss certain, which is now contingent. Therefore, while holding out indulgence, they will occasion a greater loss, than the abrupt abolition of it.

But the regulations will be accepted with a design to evade them. In this case, the Legislature becomes answerable for the oppression and murder connected with this trade.

C O N C L U S I O N.

IF the subject be discussed, the trade will be found so iniquitous, that it cannot be left on its present footing, or be possibly regulated. Let the abolition then take place on the broad basis of humanity, justice, and sound policy. All particular circumstances will easily accommodate themselves to the new situation of things.

POST-

P O S T S C R I P T.

I SHOULD be ungrateful to pass over the candour of the author of the Considerations on Emancipation, &c. to myself. He has laid me under very great obligations, by stepping forward to vindicate my reputation from the many horrid charges brought against me by my former adversaries ; especially, for clearing me of the crime of cruelty to my slaves, which has been circulated in every company where slavery has been agitated, and mentioned with as much abhorrence, as if no man besides me had been unfeeling in his treatment. He will allow me to observe, that that irritation, which he makes the alloy of my temper, cannot be intolerable, if it permits me to be affectionate in my family, easy to my slaves, and charitable to the poor ; for to these the natural temper is least under disguise. He indeed takes out the sting, by charging my disputes to the pique and prejudice of my enemies. I may add, among those praised in my Essay, are some, who were then my inveterate foes. He will also indulge me in correcting his mistake concerning the M. Reviewers. Far from censuring injurious epithets in my writings, they blamed their want of warmth. From their late conduct I have only learned, that to utter false criminal libels against Mr. R. in low vulgar language, is decent moderate conduct in his adversaries ; but it is abuse for him to use the most cautious terms in his own vindication.

But p. 36. I am charged with misrepresentation. If he will peruse my Essay, he will see I prevent the conclusion of indiscriminate ill-treatment of

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slaves,

slaves, by observing, that arbitrary power in the master has not all those ill consequences with which sensibility is apt to charge it. And if this, and many passages of like import, be not sufficient to excuse me, I cheerfully embrace this opportunity of declaring, that the nature of slavery, not the disposition of the master, is chargeable with the enormities connected with this debasing state. But he allows that there is occasion for censure, and that my book contains many truths, which he wishes, for the honour of human nature, he could deny. Indeed, if it were not an invidious task, every circumstance in it might be referred to individuals, probably well known to this gentleman. I hope this is the last time I shall have occasion to mention myself, on a subject, that ought not to be blended with the reputation of its advocates. But as I am tired of being obliged to carry about with me proofs of the innocency of my character, to vindicate it from the calumny cast upon it in every company, where my private interest can be hurt, or the cause in which I am engaged, injured; and as this work may come into hands, which these Considerations may not reach, I trust I shall stand excused with the public for inserting from them here my own eulogium, mixed as it is with irritation of temper, and misrepresentation of facts.

EXTRACT

EXTRACT from CONSIDERATIONS on the Emancipation of Negroes, and on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by a West-India Planter, page 34, &c.

“ HAVING introduced the name of this writer, (Mr. Ramsay) without whose labours the subject of slavery would not probably have been so much agitated at this day, I cannot dismiss him without farther mention, as well to rescue his character from unmerited reproach, as to caution his readers against the exaggerations of his pen. As a husband and father he was affectionate and provident. As a pastor, decent, pious, temperate, and exemplary. As a master of slaves, so far was he from indulging in the exercise of cruelty, that he was remarkably abstemious in the use of discipline, even on necessary occasions. He was charitable to the poor, and punctual in his pecuniary transactions. His good qualities were many; but at the same time, his temper was prone to irritation; and if not absolutely vindictive, he was at least extremely liberal in the use of injurious epithets, as appears from his writings, which have drawn on him the correction of the learned Journalist, under whose review they have passed, though otherwise sufficiently disposed to favour his cause.

“ Unfortunately his book was written during a state of warfare with his parishioners; a contest unprovoked, it must be allowed by any act on his part, inconsistent with the character of a good man, but suggested by pique, and prosecuted by party, on the other side. However, he has combined his own injuries with the injuries

“ries of the slaves, and given scope to his resent-
 “ment, while he appears an advocate in the cause
 “of humanity. That his book contains a great
 “many truths, I wish, for the honour of human
 “nature, I could deny. Where authority exists,
 “it is too apt to be abused. Slavery therefore
 “necessarily supposes such a state of oppression
 “and consequent abasement, as is unpractised
 “among the free orders of society, and for a good
 “reason, because it is untolerated. But to sup-
 “pose those oppressions either so frequent, or se-
 “vere as they are charged to be, would certainly
 “be to give too great a degree of credit to his
 “misrepresentations.”

N. B. Page 40, he allows with me that French
 slaves are better clothed and better fed than Eng-
 lish slaves; a truth, which has been disputed with
 me.

F I N I S.

